Learning Conversation Notes		
Name of Partner:	Date:	
Bobbie Brown – MusicTalk Inc.	August 2, 2005	
Number of Children Served:	Ages:	
131	2 year olds - 4	
	3 year olds –	37
	4 year olds – 58	
	5 year olds - 32	
When Served:	Gender:	Ethnicity:
December 2004 to June 2005	Male – 92	Caucasian - 68
	Female - 32	African/American – 15
		Hispanic – 26
		Asian – 12
		Hindu - 10

Conversation Participants:

Judy Marston – Facilitator, Don Ferretti, Michael Romero, Nancy Baggett, Bobbie Brown, Fiona Tuttle, Dolleen Toms – Recorder

Desired Outcomes:

- There will be improved communication skills between children who participate in the program and their peers, educators, and parents.
- Financial sustainability for *MusicTalk*, *Inc.*, reducing dependence on First 5 funding.

Performance Measures:

- Demographics (number of 0-5 served by gender, age, ethnicity, and when services were provided).
- Survey results and written observations from speech language pathologist, parents, and educators.
- Video and audio taped recording of children communicating through music (three sample classrooms).
- Detailed listing of new funds received.

What is this data telling us about achievement of outcomes?

The ratio of boys to girls are 3-1.

Largest group of kids is 4 year olds.

More 2-3 year olds being served than in the past.

This program is serving more of a percentage of Asian, Africian American, and Hindu children than would be expected, based on the overall Placer County demographics.

Pilot survey was administered to group of 22 parents relative to 12 children in two similarly functioning classes of 3-5 year olds on autism spectrum.

Results from survey:

Question #1

How has this program affected your child's ability to communicate?

Parents reported:

- 22 children were much more verbal/vocal. A lot of children will vocalize and are not verbal.
- 18 children's participation /involvement increasing 4 were not sure.
- 19 children's attention/focus skills improving 3 are not sure.
- 22 children showed noticeable increase in self-assurance when verbalizing. Children are more confident when verbalizing.
- 22 children have learned new words and actions from songs.

Question #2

What tools or skills has the program given you?

Parents reported:

- 22 They appreciate tools they were given, appreciate parent packets.
- 22 Liked the parent meetings/support.
- 22 Felt more comfortable singing with child using music to communicate.

Question #3

We are always trying to improve our program. How could this program be improved to better support your child's ability to communicate with you and others?

Parents suggested:

- 22 wanted more sessions.
- 22 wanted to make community more aware of program for funding opportunities.

Parents had comments regarding their children's individual growth from group session in June 2005. See attached PDF for specific comments.

Bobbie received \$2,000 from Western Placer Unified School District to help sustain the Lincoln classroom in 05-06.

Another thing that the data is telling us based on the responses received from parents in group setting, all of the children showed improvement in communication skills.

Parents like the parent meetings, every six weeks for about 1 hr.

In what ways will we apply what we have learned from our data?

Administer survey individually and not in group - track themes based on the people that answered that way.

Surprised that there were no suggestions in improving the program regarding the survey question, "How can the program be improved to better support their child's ability to communicate with you and others?" Parents tend to look at facilitators as having all the answers. Parents need to be encouraged to come up with suggestions for the program.

Continue the use of DVD/CD presentations to promote and gain funding.

Other points that were made during the conversation:

There seemed to be a rate increase of girls in this program. Bobbie explained that these girls represented in the demographics tend to have special needs (physical issues, hearing impaired) other than autism.

Parents with 2 ½ year olds with special needs are just entering a program and often don't know where to turn for other services.

More classes can be offered with the current funding, but need to train more facilitators.

Playing soft music for autistic children can often help soothe them.

Updates

Website is up and running – <u>www.musictalk.org</u>

A new facilitator has been trained and will begin serving Roseville/Loomis/Lincoln. New classes 2 ½ year old (1), hearing impaired (2), language delayed (2).

Financial sustainability has been increased and dependency on First 5 funding will be decreased over the next 2 years. This is evidenced by more grants obtained.

New funding:

\$5,000 from Ceronix

\$5,000 from Pottery World

\$1,000 from Soroptimist

\$5,000 from Auburn Community Foundation

4 grants are still pending: Tiger Woods Foundation, a band called Phish Fan Club, Fujifilm, and Kroeger, Inc.

MusicTalk, Inc. is now a non profit 501(c) 3.

DVD was shared showing the *MusicTalk* program in a classroom setting. Showed children communicating with teachers and facilitators through the use of music.

Next Steps:

Finalize strategy for administrating the survey to parents with Mike by September 9, 2005.

The next Learning Conversation with First 5 will be on December 15, 2005, from 1 - 4:30 p.m.

Encourage other members from Bobbie's group, parents, First 5 Commission, and/or partners to attend the next learning conversation.